

**SUMMARY OF THE
NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2000**

The Board of Directors of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference at 1:30 p.m. on February 10, 2000. The meeting was lead by Chair Dr. James Pearson of the Virginia Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services. Dr. Pearson followed the agenda distributed previously to board members. Action items from this meeting are shown in Attachment A, incomplete action items from past meetings are shown in Attachment B, and the list of participants is shown in Attachment C.

AGENDA ITEMS

Approval of Minutes

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and approved. The board then reviewed progress on the list of Action Items which has been updated to reflect this discussion.

On-site Assessment Committee

Dr. Pearson introduced Mr. William Ingersoll, chair of the Accreditation Process committee, who had requested guidance from the board on issues his committee is addressing. Mr. Ingersoll presented issues which his committee has raised.

Laboratory Assessor Training Course Issues

Arrangements for two presentation of the basic laboratory on-site assessor training course have been made, one planned for an East-coast site and one planned for a West-coast site. Costs are expected to be approximately \$250 per person, not including any course improvements. It was agreed that all participants should be asked for their evaluation. The issue of approval of the training providers has yet to be resolved, considering resource constraints and the role of NELAC as solely a standard-setting conference.

Technical Training Course Issues

The committee requested guidance on how to proceed with development of technical training course materials (including checklists), which have a potential for 8 different areas of expertise; these materials are in varying states of completion. It was noted that materials need to be able to accommodate Performance Based Measurement Systems (PBMS); however, since EPA has not settled on a PBMS definition any specific action should be postponed. The committee should communicate with the PBMS subcommittee that has been established under the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB).

The board voiced the need for the training and checklists, as well as concerns for specifications (e.g., course length) that would inflate costs. Alternatives to requirements for classroom presentation were encouraged. Ms. Finazzo (board liaison to the committee) will meet with the committee at its next meeting to relay the board's direction.

Committee Member Replacement

The appointment of Mr. Richard Sheibley as a replacement for Mr. Steve Baker has been submitted by the committee for approval by the chair. In order to expedite the committee's work,

Dr. Pearson gave his verbal approval and will send the written appointment shortly.

NELAP Accrediting Authority meetings

Dr. Jackson summarized the issues that this group has been addressing. A major issue is “one-stop shopping” due to the differing accreditation options being offered by each NELAC accrediting authority. This is part of the group’s efforts to minimize NELAC accreditation issues for applicant laboratories, and includes proficiency testing (PT) analytes and ambiguities that are being identified in the standards. The group is expecting 1000-1200 laboratories to be in the first round of applicant laboratories.

ACS Symposium

Ms. Hankins reviewed the announcement by Dr. Lipnick of EPA’s Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics of the call for papers for the 220th National Meeting of the American Chemical Society, scheduled for August 20-25, 2000 in Washington, DC. It was agreed that an update on NELAC’s status and progress might be welcomed. Ms. Finzzo will check on the relevance of such a presentation and report back to the board.

ISO 17025 and NELAC Standards

Ms. Hankins recalled the December, 1999 announcement of the impending replacement of ISO Guide 25 with IS 17025 as the result of its recent adoption by voting members. Following discussion of this development and the intention of NELAC to maintain consistency with relevant international standards, it was moved, seconded and unanimously approved that:

This board endorses the concepts of ISO 17025 and will to move the NELAC standards to fully conform to the ISO standard within 2 years, or as soon as possible, consistent with the NELAC standard adoption process.

New Business

There was a question on the number of new NELAC accrediting authority applications that have been received for this year. The response was that Louisiana (a second program) has submitted their application, Virginia and Wisconsin plan to submit applications shortly. It was also noted that the process for Oregon is nearly completed.

Next Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of this board is scheduled for March 9, 2000.

**NEW ACTION ITEMS
NELAC BOARD OF TELECONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 10, 2000**

Item No.	Action	Status
1	Ms. Finazzo will meet with the On-site Assessment committee at its next meeting to relay the board's direction regarding technical training.	
2	Dr. Pearson will send his written appointment of Richard Sheibly to the On-site Assessment committee shortly.	
3	Ms. Finazzo will check on the relevance of a presentation at the 2000 ACS national meeting and report back to the board.	

INCOMPLETE ACTION ITEMS FROM PAST MEETINGS

Date of Meeting	Action	Status
01/11/1999	Committee Chairs are to prepare “Frequently Asked Questions” for posting on the NELAC Website. They are to submit these to Dr. Irene Ronning.	On-going
02/04/1999	Ms. Hankins, Ms. Batterton, Ms. Sample and Dr. Hartwig will work on developing a training program for the Committee Chairs.	Completed
	Material was updated in response to comments. Ms. Sample and Ms. Labie will review.	On-going
9/23/1999	Dr. Jackson will draft a policy for responding to future offers of NELAC-associated activities at national meetings.	On-going
10/28/1999	Ms. Barbara Finazzo will coordinate contact of USEPA regional tribal coordinators to determine extent of existing tribal environmental programs, and interest in NELAC	Definite interest found; will continue to explore options.
12/2/1999	Ms. Hankins will distribute recent Federal Partners’ meeting minutes in which exemption of federal agencies as secondary accrediting authorities is addressed.	On-going
1/18/2000	Ms. Hankins will finalize the AARB charter and have it posted on the NELAC Website.	Completed
1/18/2000	Ms. Hankins will seek clarification on USEPA’s NELAC staffing plans.	Clarification requested; awaiting response
1/18/2000	Ms. Labie will contact Ms. Nancy Wentworth regarding presentation of a paper on current NELAC issues at the 19 th QA conference in Albuquerque, NM.	Confirmation of abstract has been received.
1/18/2000	Dr. Jackson will update a mailing list and finalize a letter to encourage participation in NELAC committees.	Draft letter & list Emailed to board
	Board members will place follow-up calls to recipients as needed.	On-going
1/18/2000	Dr. Pearson will request a meeting with Deputy Administrator McCabe for NELAC board members.	On-going
1/18/2000	Mr. Bivins (chair of Field Activities committee) will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • send an acknowledgment of the Air Control Techniques letter, and • follow up by telephone. 	Completed

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2000**

Name	Affiliation	Telephone Numbers
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